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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY China

SUBJECT Young People in Communist China/Their Aspirations and Attitudes

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2. At the time of the Communist take over, in the winter of 1949-1950, the soft spoken and good mannered Party vanguards arrived at Kucheng Township in Sanwei (Hsinhui) District with a considerable amount of propaganda literature. About half of this literature, [REDACTED] was addressed to young people of high school and college age. The other half was addressed to adults, mainly on promises of the raising of the standards of living under the Communist regime and on exposure of KMT corruption. In the literature addressed to youth, special emphasis was laid on:

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- a. Appeals to youth to take over the country as China's new masters, and
- b. The need to cooperate wholeheartedly with the People's Government in reforming Chinese education and new way of life in general.

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[REDACTED] similar types of propaganda literature had been distributed in other areas in Kwangtung Province, includ-
ing the city of Canton.

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3. All through the year 1950 student morale and enthusiasm were high. Students in rural as well as urban areas liked the new age under the Communist regime.

[REDACTED] most youngsters were happy because:

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- a. They attended very few classes and had practically no homework, spending the day haranguing street corner crowds, demonstrating, parading, interrogating people in neighboring communities or working in party offices.
- b. They were completely free from parental control. In some cases they were even feared by their parents as potential Party spies and accusers.
- c. They enjoyed unprecedented associations with students of the opposite sex which the Party positively encouraged. In rural areas, however, there was less promiscuity than in cities.
- d. They loved all the excitement of a social turmoil in which they felt they were the center and in which they thought they had everything to gain and nothing to lose.
- e. They were happy to see all expenses paid by the State, although the meals served were not all satisfactory.

4. After the lapse of about a year, the fascination of the new order began to wear thin for most young people. Some of them realized that the endless rounds of mass meetings, speech making, and drum song (Yangko) dances would land them nowhere eventually, and that although they were advanced automatically to a higher grade at the end of the school year, they had learned nothing except the recitation of a few Party doctrine formulas. The one attractive goal, that of enjoyment of full Party membership, seemed remote for that involved intensive study of the writings of Marx, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao, and their whole works were expensive items on the book market. Most of the high school graduates in 1951 began to relax in despair.

5. The children of "poor farmers" and farm laborers were elated for a time. It was announced by the stern Party workers (who had replaced the mild-mannered vanguards) that such young people could petition on behalf of their parents for grain loans from the People's Government at no interest. They had to present evidence that they had been loyal and hard working supporters of the New China. But that was not difficult as all evidence was accepted and petitions granted. The youngsters felt that they had plenty of "face". Their disillusionments came quickly, however, for:

- a. The grain loan was what was called granary bottom rice (ts'angti mi) and was scarcely edible.
- b. When repayment time came after the harvest, each lender was "urged to contribute 30 percent to the "Resist the US and Aid Korea" campaign, although technically no interest was collected.
- c. Still, quite a few were adamant on being "progressive" and continued to press forward.

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[REDACTED] The most emphatic points made were:

- a. Confucius was a national criminal -- retarding China's progress for two thousand years.
- b. Sun Yat-sen was a forerunner of the New Age, but was only like Hung Hsiu-Ch'uan, the T'aiiping Revolution leader -- not at all comparable to Mao Tse-tung.

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- c. Dictatorship of the proletariat was the only true democracy, so that there was no point in studying fake democracy in the US.

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Long arguments ensued with the pro-Communist young man oftentimes embarrassed. On such occasions he would say: "Study the works of the master minds more closely and you will understand" or "The Party says so, and it must be right."

7. Young people in the Canton area who were politically ambitious would seek admission into the Nan Fang (Southern) University in preference to any other institution because:

- a. Membership in the study body in Nan Fang was identical with candidacy for Communist Party membership; and
- b. A distinguished graduate of Nan Fang University might win admission to one of the three following "supreme" institutions of highest learning in Peking:
 - (1) Revolutionary Military Research Institute headed by Liu Po-Ch'eng.
 - (2) People's Revolutionary University headed by Wu Yu-chang.
 - (3) Ma-lieh Hsueh-wen (Marxist-Leninist Institute) headed by Liu Shao-ch'i "with the assistance of more Soviet professors than could be found in any other institution in China".

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